Mysore Tourist attractions

Mysore is the second largest city in the state of Karnataka, India. The name *Mysore* is an anglicised version of *Mahishūru*, which means the abode of *Mahisha*. *Mahisha* stands for Mahishasura, a demon from the Hindu mythology. The city is spread across an area of 128.42 km² (50 sq mi) and is situated at the base of the Chamundi Hills.

Mysore Palace : is a palace situated in the city. It was the official residence of the former royal family of Mysore, and also housed the durbar (royal offices).The term





"Palace of Mysore" specifically refers to one of these palaces, Amba Vilas.

Brindavan Gardens is a show garden that has a beautiful botanical park, full of exciting fountains, as well as boat rides beneath the dam. Diwans of Mysore planned and built the gardens in connection with the construction of the dam. Display items include a musical fountain. Various biological research departments are housed here. There is a guest house for tourists.It is situated at Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) dam.



Jaganmohan Palace : was built in the year 1861 by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in a predominantly Hindu style to serve as an alternate palace for the royal family. This palace housed the royal family when the older Mysore Palace was burnt down by a fire. The palace has three floors and has stained glass shutters and ventilators. It has housed the Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery since the year 1915. The collections exhibited here include paintings from the famed Travancore ruler, Raja Ravi Varma, the Russian painter Svetoslav Roerich and many paintings of the Mysore painting style.



Chamundi Hills is close to the palace city of Mysore. Its average elevation is 1,000 meters. A panoramic view of the city is seen from the top of the hills. Among other







landmarks, you can see the race course, the Lalitha Mahal palace, Mysore Palace, Karanji and Kukkarahalli lakes. At dusk, the view of the city is especially beautiful, and on Sunday evenings and during the Dasara festival, the illuminated Mysore Palace glitters like gold.

St. Philomena's Church : is a church built in the honour of St. Philomena in the city of Mysore. It was constructed in 1956 using a Neo Gothic style and its architecture was inspired by the Cologne Cathedral in Germany. In 1926, Thamboo Chetty who was a secretary to the Maharaja of Mysore, Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar obtained a relic of the saint from Peter Pisani, Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies. This relic was handed over to Father Cochet who approached the king to assist him in constructing a church in honour of St. Philomena]. The Maharaja of Mysore laid the foundation stone of the church on 28 October 1933. In his speech on the day of the inauguration, the Maharaja is quoted to have said: The new church will be strongly and securely built upon a double foundation — Divine compassion and the eager gratitude of men.. The construction of the church was completed under Bishop Rene Fuga's supervision. The relic of Saint Philomena is preserved in a catacomb below the main altar.



Jayalakshmi Vilas Mansion : This palace was built in the year 1905 by Chamaraja Wodeyar for his eldest daughter Jayalakshmi Devi. This mansion has three wings and contains a series of twin Corinthian and Ionic columns, regal pediments and oval ventilators. The mansion was originally built with a cost of Rs. 7 lakhs. This mansion was acquired by the Mysore University to house its post-graduate campus. It was renovated in the year 2002 from funding provided by Infosys foundation. The main hall in this mansion is the Kalyana Mantapa which has an eight-petal shaped

dome with stained glass windows with a gold-plated Kalasha(tower) at the top. A new gallery called as Writer's Gallery has been created in the Kalyana Mantapa hall that will exhibit personal items, photographs, awards and writings of renowned writers of Kannada. A special illumination system has also been added to this heritage structure. This mansion is said to be the first university museum complex in the country.

Lalitha Mahal: is the second largest palace in Mysore. It is located near the Chamundi Hills, east of the city.The architect of this palace was Mr E W Fritchley. The palace was built by Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV in the year 1921 for the exclusive stay of the Viceroy of India. The palace is pure white in colour and is built in the style of Italian palazzo with twin Ionic columns and domes. It also has a sprawling terrace and landscaped gardens.



Regional Museum of Natural History: This museum is located on the banks of the Karanji lake in Mysore and has exhibits related to biological diversity, ecology and geology of Southern India.



Folk Lore Museum: This museum is located in the University of Mysore campus and exhibits over 6500 folk art and crafts from all over the state of Karnataka.

Rail Museum: This museum is located near the Mysore Railway station and is the second one of its kind established in India after the one at Delhi. This museum exhibits ancient locomotives and carriages some of which are still in working condition. Photographs and books related to railway are also present.



Oriental Research Institute , formerly known as the Oriental Library, established in 1891 contains over 33000 palm leaf manuscripts.

Mysore Zoo : one of the oldest and most popular zoos in India. Located on the outskirts of Mysore, the zoo is home to a wide range of wild species. The official name for the zoo is Shri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, though it is known



commonly by its shortened name. Mysore Zoo is one of the city's most popular attractions. It was established under royal patronage in 1892, making it one of the oldest zoos in the world.

Srirangapatna : (also spelt Srirangapatna; anglicized to Seringapatam during the British Raj) is a town , situated a mere 13 km from Mysore city .The entire town is enclosed by the river Kaveri to form an island . The town takes its name from the celebrated Ranganathaswamy temple which dominates the town, making Srirangapattana one of the most important Vaishnavite centers of pilgrimage in south India. Srirangapattana became the de facto capital of Mysore under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. Other attractions include the Jumma Masjid (a Mosque) and the Daria Daulat Gardens. The Karighatta (Black Hill) and its temple of Lord Srinivasa is situated a few kilometres from the town. The deity is that of *Kari-giri-vasa* (one who resides on the black hill). The famous Nimishambha temple is located in the near by district of Ganjam. The summer palace of Tipu Sultan is also a very interesting place.



Ranganthittu Bird Sanctuary : is a small Bird Sanctuary ,being only 0.67 km². in area, and comprises six islets on the banks of the Kaveri River. Ranganthittu is located near the historic town of Srirangapatna. The islets came into being when a dam across the Kaveri river was built in the 1700s. The ornithologist Dr. Salim Ali observed that the isles formed an important nesting ground for birds, and persuaded the Wodeyar kings of Mysore to declare the area a wildlife sanctuary in 1940.The islands are host to numerous small mammals, including Bonnet Macaque, colonies of Flying Fox and common small mammals like Common Palm Civet and Indian Gray Mongoose and the monitor lizard.The Mugger Crocodile or Marsh Crocodile is a common inhabitant of the riverine reed beds. Breeding water birds include Painted Stork, Asian Openbill Stork, Common Spoonbill, Woolly-necked Stork, Black-headed Ibis, White Ibis, Lesser Whistling Duck, Indian Shag, Stork-billed Kingfisherand other common birds like egrets, cormorants, Oriental Darter, and herons. The Great Stone Plover, and River Tern also nest here. The park is home to a large flock of Streak-throated Swallows.



Melukote in Pandavapura taluk of Mandya district, Karnataka, is one of the sacred places in Karnataka. The place is also known as Thirunarayanapuram. It is built on rocky hills known as Yadavagiri or Yadugiri overlooking the Cauvery valley. The principal temple is a square building of large dimensions but very plain, dedicated to Lord Cheluva-Narayana Swamy





On the top of the hill is an impressive temple of Yoga Narasimha. Krishnaraja Wodeyar III presented a gold crown to this temple.

Shivanasamudra Falls : is the second biggest waterfall in India and the sixteenth largest in the world.[8] It is situated on the banks of the river Kaveri and is the location of the first Hydro-electric Power station in Asia, which was set up in the year 1902 . This is a segmented waterfall. Segmented waterfalls occur where the water flow is broken into two or more channels before dropping over a cliff, resulting in multiple side by side waterfalls. It has an average width of 849 meters, a height of 90 m, and an average volume of 934 cubic meters / sec. Gaganachukki on the left is a large horsetail waterfall and Barachukki (also spelled *Bharachukki*) on the right is a jagged crashing cascading waterfall. During the monsoon season this waterfall grows enormous, perhaps a thousand feet in width. The right waterfall is the Bharachukki. Asia's first hydro-electric power stations, still functional, is located at the waterfall. This station was commissioned by the Diwan of Mysore, Sir K. Seshadri Iyer. The electricity produced here was initially used in the Kolar Gold Fields. Thus, Kolar Gold Fields became the first town in Asia to get hydro electricity.



Somanathapura : is a town located 30 km from Mysore city in Mysore district, Karnataka, India. Somanathapura is famous for the Chennakesava Temple (also called Kesava or Keshava temple) built by Soma,





a dandanayaka (commander) in 1268 CE under Hoysala king Narasimha III, when the Hoysalas were the major power in South India. The Keshava temple is one of the finest examples of Hoysala architecture and is in a very well preserved condition. The temple is conservated by Archeological Survey of India under the category of protected heritage sites

Talakad : or Talakadu is a town on the left bank of the Kaveri river at a spot where the river makes a sharp bend. It is 45 km from Mysore .A historic site, Talakad once had over 30 temples that today are buried in sand. Now it is a scenic and spiritual pilgrimage center.[Here the eastward flowing Kaveri river changes course and seems magnificiently vast as here the sand on its banks spreads over a wide area.





At Talakad sand covers the temples. Stone pillars, square at the base and made to fit into a wheel below the abacus, lie scattered about.[13] Among the temples of Talakad, the Pathaleshwara, Maruleshwara, Arkeshwara, Vaidyanathee-shwara and Mallikarjuna temples, the five Lingams believed to represent the five faces of Shiva, form the Pancha pathi and have become famous. [15] In honour of these five Shiva temples, a fair is held once every 12 years called Panchalinga Darshana, last held in 2006. The Panchalinga Darshana is held on a new moon day in the month of Karthika when two stars conjoin, the stars of Khuha Yoga and Vishaka. There is also a Vishnu temple, Keerthinarayana.

Nanjangud : The town is famous because of the huge temple dedicated to Lord Nanjundeswara also referred to as Srikanteswara. It is believed that sage Gauthama stayed here for some time and installed a Lingam, the idol form of Shiva. Nanjangud is also known as 'Dakshina Kashi' or Varanasi of the South.



The temple was originally built by the Ganga rulers in the 9th century during their occupation of this region. The residing deity of the temple was later called *Hakim Nanjundeswara*; a title given by the Great Tippu Sultan who had faith in the God. It is said and inscribed in the temple history that his favourite and beloved elephant was bestowed with eyesight by the Lord, after Tippu Sultan's vow with the local deity. The Sultan then had a Lingam

made of jade along with an emerald necklace and donated it to the temple. The *Vaidya Nanjundeswara*, even today is said to be a healer for his believers, and one can see even today worshippers doing *Urulu seve*, a ritualistic practice after taking bath in the Kapila river.

Twice every year thousands of worshippers gather for the famous Chariot Festival locally known as the Dodda Jathre and the Chikka Jathre. Idols of Lord Srikanteshwara, Goddess Parvathi, Lord Ganapathi, Lord Subramanya and Lord Chandikeshwara are kept in five separate chariots and a traditional puja is performed to the idols early in the morning on the Jathre day. After the puja chariots are flagged off. Thousands of devotees pull the Chariots carved out of wood, across the streets of the old town. The town remains immersed in festivities on the Jathre days.



Bylakuppe : is the location of "Lugsum Samdupling" (established in 1961) and "Dickyi Larsoe" (established in 1969), two adjacent Tibetan refugee settlements, in the west of Mysore district . It consists of a number of small camps/agricultural settlements close to each other, and has a number of monasteries, nunneries and temples in all the major Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Most notable among them are the large educational monastic institution Sera, the smaller Tashilunpo monastery (both in the Gelukpa tradition) and Namdroling monastery (in the Nyingma tradition).Particularly well known among the temples is the spectacular Golden Temple which is also a major tourist spot in the area.





Madikeri Fort: This fort was first built by Mudduraja in the last quarter of the 17th century. He also built a palace inside the fort. It was eventually rebuilt in granite by Tipu Sultan who named the site as Jaffarabad. In 1790, Doddavira Rajendra took control of the fort. The British who added to the fort in 1834. The palace was renovated by Lingarajendra Wodeyar II in 1812-1814. In the north-east corner at the entrance are two life size masonry elephants and a church is present in the south-east corner. At the Western End of Madikeri, Raja's Seat is a small pavilion with a garden surrounding it; offering a view of the green valley below.

Dubare Elephant Camp is located on the banks of River Kaveri (Cauveri) in the district of Kodagu (Coorg), Karnataka. The Karnataka Forest Department has about 150 Elephants in various camps and Dubare has been historically an important camp. The Elephants for the famous Mysore Dussehra were trained at Dubare elephant camp. At present, after logging operations have ceased, the elephants have been practically retired except for giving some rides to tourists. The moist deciduous forests of dubare are home to many wild animals and a plethora of birds. Sighting of wild Asiatic Elephants are regular and so is spotting the sambhar and the spotted deer. With a little luck one can spot the elusive leopard and the gregarious wild dogs. The Indian Bison (Gaur) and bears are also seen in these forests. Visitors also get to notice many crocodiles in the waters of River Cauvery at Dubare. The forests are also home to many reptiles non-venomous snakes. Birdlife in Dubare is wonderful with peacock, partridge, kingfisher and woodpeckers topping the list.





Halebidu was the 12th century capital of the Hoysalas. The Hoysaleswara temple was built during this time by Ketamala and attributed to Vishnuvardhana, the Hoysala ruler. It enshrines Hoysaleswara and Shantaleswara, named after the temple builder Vishnuvardhana Hoysala and his wife, Queen Shantala. Then it was ransacked by the armies of Malik Kafur in the early 14th century, after which it fell into a state of disrepair and neglect.



Belur was the early capital of the Hoysala Empire. With Halebidu which is only 16 km away, this is one of the major tourist destinations in Karnataka, India. Belur is located in Hassan district. According to inscriptions discovered here, it was also referred to as Velapuri. The main attraction in Belur is the Chennakesava temple complex which contains the Chennakesava Temple (dedicated to Lord Chennakeshava , meaning handsome Vishnu) as the centre piece, surrounded by the Kappe Chennigraya temple built by Shantaladevi, queen of king Vishnuvardhana.



There are two more shrines here that are still in use by devotees and there is a *Pushkarni* or stepped well to the right side of the main entrance. The Dravida style *rayagopuram* at the entrance which was a later addition by the Vijayanagar kings, who considered this deity as one of their *Kuladevata* or family god.

The temple is one of the finest examples of Hoysala architecture. It was built by king Vishnuvardhana in commemoration of his victory over the Cholas at Talakad in 1117 CE. Legend has it that it took 103 years to complete and Vishnuvardhana's grandson Veera Ballala II completed the task. The facade of the temple is filled with intricate sculptures and friezes with no portion left blank. The intricate workmanship includes elephants, lions, horses, episodes from the Indian mythological epics, and sensuous dancers (*Shilabalikas*). Inside the temple are a number of ornate pillars. *Darpana Sundari* (Lady with the mirror) carved on walls of Belur Temple is one of major attraction in complex.

SHRAVANABELAGOLA : The Vindhyagiri hill is home to a thousand-year-old gigantic 17.38 meter high monolithic stone statue of the Bhagavan Gomateshwara Bahubali, considered to be the world's largest, built by Chamundaraya, a general of King Gangaraya. The base of the statue has inscriptions in Kannada (dated 981 CE) and Tamil, as well as the oldest evidence of written Marathi from 981 AD. These inscriptions on the base of this thousand-year old statue is a tribute to King from his general, Chamundaraya, who had funded the construction of the statue.[1] The inscription concerns the Ganga king who funded the effort, and his general Chamundaraya, who erected the statue for the king. Every 12 years, thousands of devotees congregate here to perform the Mahamastakabhisheka, a spectacular ceremony in which the thousand-year-old statue is anointed with milk, curds, ghee, saffron and gold coins. The next Mahamastakabhisheka will be held in 2018 A.D.



OOTY : Located in the mountainous range called the Blue Mountains or Nilgiris, Ooty draws a large number of tourists every year. The weather is quite



pleasant at a mean of 15 to 20 °C (59 to 68 °F) year round, dropping to lows of 0 °C (32 °F) during winter.

The landscape is marked by rolling hills and plateaus covered with dense vegetation, tea gardens, and eucalyptus trees. Many portions of the hills are preserved as natural reserve forests, and special permits are needed to camp outside of campgrounds. Ooty is more of a focal point of attraction for tourists, who also undertake auto tours of the surrounding countryside.

The hilly region also houses smaller towns like Coonoor and Kotagiri. These towns are less than an hour's drive away from Ooty and enjoy the same climate, but have fewer tourists and cheaper prices.



Himavad Gopalaswamy Betta, is a hill (betta in Kannada) located in the Chamarajanagar district of the state of Karnataka,at a height of 1454 m and is extensively wooded. It is also the highest peak in the Bandipur National Park and is frequented by wild life including elephants. Dense fog predominates and covers the hills round the year and thus gets the prefix Himavad and the temple of Venugopalaswamy (Lord Krishna) gives the full name of Himavad Gopalaswamy Betta. The peak is the view point of the three states of Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka.



Edakkal is a remotely located place in the Wayanad district of Kerala in India. The tallest mountain in the district named Ambukuthi mala is here. Three pre-historic caves (Edakkal Caves), dating from around 8,000 BC onwards had been discovered here at a height of 1000 mts on Ambukuthi Mala. You have to alight at Edakkal and do a 1 km trekking to reach these caves. One can see the new stone age pictorial writings on the walls of these natural caves (Cave murals).

The cave drawings depict pictures of ancient tribal chieftains, elephants, queens and tools. A slightly less ancient script from the 3rd or 4th century BC is also seen in the caves which, thankfully, is impeccably maintained.

The Caves open for public viewing at 08:30 and close by 16:30. One could still go up to the Main Cave till 17:30 IST, but without the trek up to the view point, the whole trip is meaningless. So, it is better to be at the ticket counter by 15:00 IST if one desires to have the view of the three states borders. Tourists might also want to club the close by places around Ambalavayal - Edakkal Heritage Museum, Phantom Rock and the ancient Jain Temple while planning a visit to the Caves.

Carvings on the walls of Edakkal Caves were created during different time periods. The oldest carvings date from the Neolithic Period. It was the British Officer stationed here, during a hunting expedition, came across these caves.

Pookode Lake is a scenic lake in Wayanad district, Kerala, South India. The lake is surrounded by forests. A children's park, boating, spices and handicrafts counter form part of the attraction.

